

Connect, Grow & Go

To Glorify God as a Disciple-Making Outpost of Kingdom Life

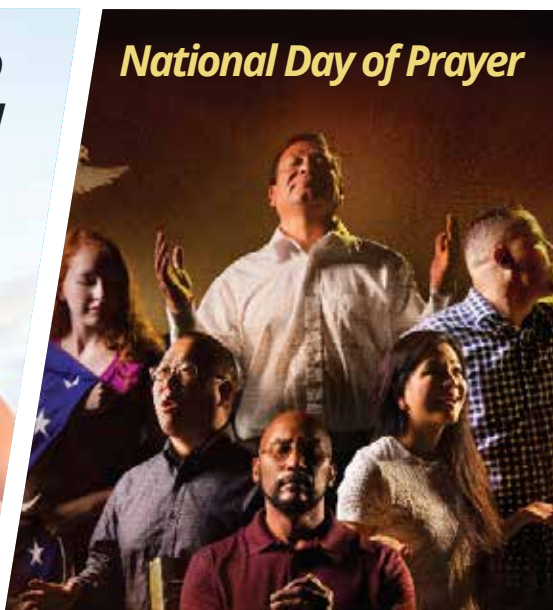


Kingdom Life Podcast

Here's What's Going on at VPC in May 2021



Reason to Celebrate!



National Day of Prayer

Desk of Executive Director



“But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”

Matthew 6:33. This is the verse of the year for VPC. How are you seeking first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness? What does this verse mean to you? To me seeing first his kingdom and his righteousness means to put God first in my life, to fill my thoughts with his desires, to pray that his thoughts are my thoughts and my deeds are his will. Do I

always succeed, no. My humanness is always there. Finding rhythms to invite God into the day are important in living to put God first. Filling the mind with His word, His ways, His desires is a way to start.

Praying for our country, our leaders, churches, communities, and each other is one way to ask God into our lives. It is one of the best ways we can influence each other and all we are encountering. God is big enough to bring us together! Believe, Hope, Pray! One of best resources I've read is “The Circle Maker; Praying Circles Around Your Biggest Dreams and Greatest Fears” by Mark Batterson. Prayer is direct conversation with God!

In the current sermon series, we are learning why we believe. It is a powerful series pulling line for line the meaning of the Apostles Creed. It is currently on Spotify as a podcast as well as on YouTube if you've missed it. For those who do not know what a podcast is, you will learn more about that in this month's Connect Grow and Go! It is an exciting project that Kelly Wensley, Director of Communications, has been working on! She helps us stay relevant!

May 1st is a day we are celebrating! We will host Family Promise in the Family Life Center beginning May 1st! We had a wonderful work day on April 14th to ready the building. We had approximately 50 people come to spruce up the building as well as many other areas of the church. Let's just say, our closets are CLEAN!!

Genna Sarikoki held a sale for those items in the Family Life Center that we were not able to keep or use. She raised over \$800 for Children's Ministry. Also, we donated items that have been sitting for years to local area daycares and preschools so they are being put to good use.

Trustees are working on projects across campus with the funds raised through the Campus Enhancement Match.

- Fellowship Hall has gotten a new ceiling. The kitchen will be repaired and painted soon.
- The outdoor patio area near the Glass House will be repaired. We've already chosen the pavers and design. The company repairing the pavers will get to work as soon as the resources needed come in.

- Another project in the works is the elevator repair in the Administration Building. Many of you do not see or use the elevator but it is a necessary project for many who come into the building.
- The carpet in the chapel will be replaced in the next couple weeks. Due to COVID it has been difficult to receive materials. We are being patient! It will happen!

In closing, it has been a gift to see so many back in church. Protocols are relaxed at the 11AM service but are strict at the 9AM service to help with comfort levels. For the snowbirds returning home – safe travels and may God be with you. We hope you will stay connected online while you are away.

Christine Bruen
Executive Director, VPC



**O Lord,
You know me.
You know when I sit
And when I stand.
You have me always present
In your mind.
For this, Lord, I thank you.
You know the path for my life
And what is best for me.
Lord, reveal to me the path I am to walk.
Bless me and guide me
And be Lord to me
So that whichever road I take
I may do all for your glory.
In Jesus' name. Amen**

*(Vocation Prayer from the
Beech Grove Benedictine Community)*

Church Leadership

Session

Teaching Elders

Christopher Romig
Carolyn Wilson

Clerk of Session

Laurie Wright
Bob Allen
Jennie Chaplin
Nick Clemmer
Susie Gottschalk
Tom Hoffman
Judith Holmes
Sheryl Morford
Carlene Painter
Jamal Sarikoki
Carolyn Stephens
Jim Weeks
Shelly Wharton

Board of Trustees

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Susie Gottschalk
Bill Morgan
Lois Schmoe
Donna Wainright
Kathy Wood

Bob Allen (Session Rep)
Tom Hoffman (Session Rep)

Board member contact information is available through the Realm app via your phone or signing in to www.onrealm.org

Our Vision in Action

To Glorify God As A Disciple-Making
Outpost Of Kingdom Life

OFFICE HOURS

Mon - Thurs, 9 am - 4 pm
Friday, 9 am - 12 pm

WORSHIP SERVICE HOURS

Sunday, 9 am and 11 am in-person & online at
www.venicepres.org

COMMUNION ON THE LAWN

Third Wednesday of the month at 9 am



May 9, 2021

VPC Staff

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cromig@venicepres.org

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cobrien@venicepres.org

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FACILITY & A/V
Gary Youngberg
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What is RightNow Media?

RightNow Media is an extensive video library with access on demand from your TV, computer, tablet, or phone. It is similar to Netflix, but with a distinctive difference. RightNow is faith-based and covers issues from leadership, teams, and dealing with change, to topics such as marriage, parenting, finances, and even recovery. This free resource gives you access to over 5,000 videos from leaders such as Patrick Lencioni, Marcus Buckingham, Zig Ziglar, John Maxwell, Dave Ramsey, and Francis Chan. There is even a family section with thousands of shows and cartoons for kids to enjoy.

You have Free Access to **RightNow Media**. Call the office for instruction.



Groups are welcome!

Reserve a room and promote your activity



VPC offers over 10 meeting spaces for a wide range of group types. To **reserve** one of our rooms for your next event, group meeting or gathering, please contact your staff liaison or go online at <https://www.venicepres.org/reserve-a-room> then select the Event & Room Request Form.

To **promote** your event within the church, contact your staff liaison or go online at <https://www.venicepres.org/event-promotion> then select the Event & Room Request Form. Events may be promoted on the announcement loop before service, email blast, website, window boxes on campus, this monthly event bulletin or social media. Outside advertising is subject to approval. **Deadline for the event bulletin, Connect Grow and Go is the third Tuesday of each month.**

7 Easy Ways to Give

1. **Give Online:** Click the "Give Now" option on the top right corner of our website.
2. **Give from the App:** download the REALMCONNECT App from your phone's App store and give easily on your phone.
3. **Text Giving:**
 - Text to: **73256**
 - Use Code: **Venicepres**
 - Add the giving amount: **50** (Example: **Venicepres50**)
4. **Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT):** Automatically withdraw your gift from your checking account each month. Contact church office.
5. **Giving Boxes** are mounted on the wall by exit doors in the church to receive your gifts.
6. **Cash and Check:** We gratefully accept cash and checks in the mail or dropped off at the office.
7. **QR Code**
 - Point your camera at the QR code
 - Tap the pop-up notification to be taken to the Giving Page.



Facility Management



VOLUNTEERS : OUR UNSUNG HEROES!

All of us appreciate a well-tended campus as we attend VPC for various functions. Although we have contractors for the major upkeep items on our campus of 5 buildings and acres of grass, many smaller tasks fall to volunteers or staff for completion.

I would like to recognize and applaud just a few faithful servants who regularly use their time and talents to maintain our campus so well.

Wilbur Bernstein shows up several times a week! He checks and services our sprinkler systems; changing out parts as needed.

He polices the campus to pick up trash and palm fronds, sprays weed killer on hardscaping, and regularly washes windows on entrance doors.

Jim Fullerton comes regularly to do paint work on buildings, pressure wash sidewalks and entry-ways, and assist with two-man jobs as I may need.

Jim Mattes has come multiple times to assist with painting and landscape work as he is available.

Ted and Anne Stark plant and maintain flower beds in front of room 9, and the 'Buddy Break' garden outside room 11. They come faithfully each week to weed, improve and water these beds. Last week they placed three planters at entrances to the 'Family Promise' building to welcome our new tenants

Bob and Marilyn Allen spent a couple of days pressure washing the vinyl fencing around the play area of the Family Life building

Jim Weeks volunteered to spackle and paint a room inside room 11. Our giant work day in mid-April exposed some holes and damages.

My hat's off to these volunteer stewards of our church property!

Nick Clemmer
Facility Manager



Connect & Grow



Announcing the Book Selections for 2021-2022

Room 8, 1 PM

November 3

The Woman Who
Smashed Codes by
Jason Fagone

December 1

The News of the
World by Paulette
Jiles

January 5

The Midnight
Library by Matt Haig

February 2

The Four Winds by
Kristin Hannah

March 2

The Water is Wide
by Pat Conroy

April 6

The Splendid and
the Vile by Erik
Larson

May 4

The Lemon Tree by
Sandy Tolan

It's not too late to join!

A Ten Week Bible Study

Connect the Dots **A BIBLE OVERVIEW**

Contact Karen Norwrod
karenp630@gmail.com

Notes and Replays Available online

This Bible Study will also be live-streamed

www.venicepres.org/connect-the-dots-a-bible-overview

Worship Ministry

Sermon Series Continued

Why We Believe: The Biblical Truth in the Apostles Creed

Our Sunday messages will unpack the core beliefs of the Christian faith, looking in-depth at each phrase from the Apostles Creed – the oldest and most succinct summary of Christian beliefs. The goal of this preaching series is to help us better appreciate the essentials of our Christian faith, and to understand why it's so important to affirm these truths that have been shared by Christians across the centuries.

- May 2 *The Holy Catholic Church*
- May 9 *The Communion of Saints*
- May 16 *The Forgiveness of Sins*
- May 23 *The Resurrection of the Body*
- May 30 *The Life Everlasting*



Listen Now!

The Kingdom Life Podcast

The long awaited, "Kingdom Life Podcast" is now available on most major podcast platforms including Spotify and Apple Podcast (*the app is on your iphone already*).

A podcast is an audio program, just like Talk Radio, but you subscribe to it on your smartphone and listen to it whenever you like. Podcasts are easy to listen to on-the-go, in your home or just puttering around in your garden.

As many of you will be driving back north, this is a great opportunity listen to the sermons from VPC. The Beatitudes and Apostles Creed sermon series are now available. The podcast will be updated weekly.

Additionally, we will offer special presentations such as Pastor Chris's discussion on the Rapture. Don't forget to subscribe and you will be notified when new episodes are available.

Safety Tip: Before service begins, make note of where the building exits and fire extinguishers are.

Quick Tip: To avoid waiting to enter the sanctuary for Sunday's worship services, please print your registration confirmation and drop it off in the basket.

What's Happening in the A/V Booth?

Lighting is something that is essential to your worship. You don't even realize it until there is some sort of mishap!

With our recent upgrades, every single individual light in the front of the room can be individually controlled. Currently, we change the lighting colors along with the church calendar - green during ordinary times, white/gold during easter, red during pentecost and reformation, purple/blue during advent. These are the same colors the All Things Beautiful committee use when they decorate.

Obviously, the primary goal of our lighting is to highlight the speaker or musician who is presenting. However, it is equally important to turn down lights in other portions of the chancel to maintain focus where it belongs. While this isn't terribly noticeable in the room, the livestream videos greatly benefit from this change in lighting. When someone

behind the pulpit moves (even slightly!) it is much less distracting when the lighting has been properly balanced.

Lighting is actually one of the simplest jobs in the booth on Sundays. The different lighting scenes are set up early in the week and clearly labeled on a touch screen computer. Every lighting cue is clearly marked on the planning sheet. The lighting operator simply clicks the next lighting cue from the sheet. As easy as it is, having someone focused on lighting is important because lighting changes need to happen at just the right moment.

If you're interested in seeing the lighting computer, send me an email! I'd love to walk you through it and show you just how simple our lighting operation is. We can always use more volunteers operating lights on Sunday mornings.

Genna Sarikoki,
(gsarikoki@venicepres.org)

Updated Campus Changes

As more people are getting vaccinated, Session has revisited our COVID protocols and has made the following changes:

1. Church groups are able to meet on campus without restrictions. No temps, no signing in, no cleaning spaces
2. 9 AM Worship will stay "mask mandated"
3. 11 AM Worship
 - No need to clean pews between services
 - No temperatures will be taken at the doors
 - Masks Optional
 - No need to social distance (*ribbons can be removed from pews*)
 - No limit on number in attendance

We will still register at both services for contact tracing.

Communion on the Lawn

Join us outside on the front lawn of the church, **Wednesday, May 19 at 9 AM** to receive communion in this simple, intimate outdoor service. Bring a lawn chair and sunglasses as we gather together.

Care & Compassion Ministry



Stephen Minister. If you want to find out more about Stephen Ministry, get something off your chest or just want to tell someone a joke you recently heard, we hope you will stop in. Stephen Ministry hours will be posted beginning June 1 2021.

Stephen Ministers are ready to help shoulder the burden you carry. We continue to “meet with” those who need time devoted just to them and their needs. We meet over the phone, via Zoom, Facetime and other video phone applications, and we meet in socially-distanced mutually agreeable settings.

Stephen Ministry: We are so excited!

Our Stephen Ministry at VPC now has an official location on our campus. We are in the process of creating a space in room 11 that is comfortable and inviting so that you or anyone can drop in during our designated hours to talk or just hang out with a

Give us a call. Let's talk.

Marcia Bickmore - 941-488-9379

Laura Saye - 269-339-5907

Richard Gilbert - 941-485-1494

Email us at sm@venicepres.org

GriefShare Welcomes All Who Are Grieving

GriefShare is a friendly, caring group of people who will walk alongside you through one of life's most difficult experiences. You don't have to go through the grieving process alone.

GriefShare seminars and support groups are led by people who understand what you are going through and want to help. You'll gain access to valuable GriefShare resources to help you recover from your loss and look forward to rebuilding your life.

Griefshare will resume in the fall of 2021.

For questions or to be notified, please contact Carolyn Wilson at cwilson@venicepres.org

This is a free service available to the community at large.



Music Ministry

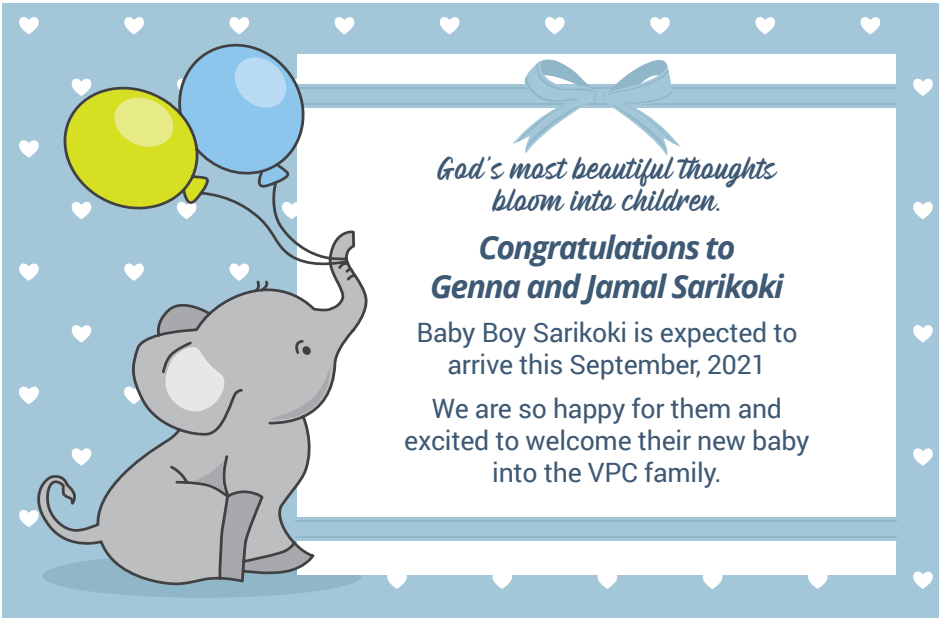
Jamal Sarikoki, VPC's Minister of Music & Worship Arts was interviewed for Sarasota Magazine's **Listening to Black Voices** series. They are sharing the stories of Sarasota's vibrant black community. In the series, a chorus of voices speak out about racism, justice and our future. Below is an excerpt from Jamal's interview. The entire article can be read here: www.sarasotamagazine.com/best-of-sarasota/listening-to-black-voices

Born and raised in Chicago, Jamal Sarikoki found his way to classical music at the age of 4 when his mother, Bessie, enrolled him in a music program at Sherwood Conservatory. Since then, he's mastered the violin, viola and organ—and he's also a minister, conductor, and an operatic and oratorio singer, known for his vocal agility and legato line.

Sarikoki, who landed his first conducting role at age 16, studied conducting and organ at Nyack College in New York and was enrolled in the graduate conducting program at Bard Conservatory. He then spent three years serving as a music associate at West Point Cadet Chapel U.S. Military Academy under the tutelage of world-renowned organist Craig Williams. Later, he served as senior

organist and director of instrumental music at Calvary Baptist Church in Manhattan.

Today, at 29, Sarikoki is the associate conductor for Key Chorale and minister of music and worship at Venice Presbyterian Church, where he is the first Black elder. He moved to Sarasota in 2017 with his wife of three years, Genna. Their first child—a baby boy—is on the way.



Missions



May MMP: Laurel Civic Association



Laurel Civic Association has been part of the community for 50 years providing services to families; in particularly the children.

When Covid-19 hit in March 2020, we modified our programs to operate virtually, and respond to meet the Community's need. We provided food, emergency preparedness kits, food gift cards, face masks, hand sanitizers, Covid-19 testing (in partnership with the Sarasota Dept. of Health), emergency rental and utility assistance to the Community. We are proud that our work in the community in support of families; particularly the children, was recognized by the Venice Chamber of Commerce as the 2020 Non-profit Business of the Year.

Youth Programs

1. Homework assistance. Due to space limitation and social distancing, 31 students from five area schools attend Laurel Civic's After School Homework Assistance Program. Students and volunteers work together in a structured and caring environment where students can complete assignments and socially interact with others. Nutritious snacks are provided so no child goes home hungry.
2. "Earning by learning" Summer Reading Program is a six-week, performance-based incentive reading program designed to improve reading skills for academically at-risk children youth.

3. Teen Empowerment. A summer workshop designed to encourage teens to be self-sufficient citizens through a variety of seminars, field trips, hands-on learning activities and more.

Your gifts will allow us to:

- Keep the doors open during and after Covid-19
- Currently, we only have partial staff providing services to the families
- Acquire Needed Materials
- Provide Scholarships
- Develop a Mentor Program
- Acquire Ground breaking technology for:
 - ▶ Staff and volunteers to continue working with the youth.
 - ▶ Teen Empowerment Virtual Tours when available

To help, visit www.venicepres.org and designate your donation to Laurel Civic Association or mail a check to VPC and write "Laurel Civic" on the memo line. No gift is too small.

Your commitment to Laurel Civic is inspiring, thank you.



Day 4 Hope Volunteers Needed!

Day 4 Hope is anticipating 180 children this year at our drive through event. We need about 50 more volunteers to help us on July 31st. If you are willing to help, please contact Cindy Gossman at fredandcindy89@gmail.com or call 513-304-0197

Save the Date! Day 4 Hope Drive-Through July 31, 2021



Your change can make a difference!

We are still collecting for **3 Cents-a-Meal**. Simply drop off your donation at the church using any container you choose anytime during office hours. Or you can also give online using the GIVE NOW button on the website or send a check to the church office. Thank you for continuing to feed the needy in our area during the pandemic.

Family Ministry

Youth Nights (6th grade - high school)



Wed. evenings, 5:45-7pm on campus

- Please bring a water bottle
- Masks highly recommended
- In case of inclement weather, we will gather in the Glass House

Contact Genna Sarikoki, gsarikoki@venicepres.org

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Need Toys? Borrow Ours!

As we rearranged our supplies from the Family Life Center, we are happy to be able to offer some children's supplies to be borrowed when visitors come to town.

Currently available:

- Bins of toys (separated by age)
- A highchair
- A booster seat style highchair



Buddy Break Schedule

Spring Fling

Come join us as we enjoy planting flowers, a sack race, learn to jump rope.
May 15, 10-11:30am

Wheels Go Round

For our final Saturday before our Summer break we will get out the bikes and tricycles as well as hosting some fun trucks on campus!
June 19, 10-11:30

Would love to see donated:

- A pack and play playpen
- A stroller

To borrow items, visit www.venicepres.org/children. If you have other items you think would be useful to our community to borrow when grandkids come to visit, talk to Genna Sarikoki.



Grandparents Corner

Are you a good grandparent?

Nearly all grandparents would answer “Yes” – but their frame of reference is almost always a cultural definition: a “good grandparent” dotes on the grandchild, helps with care, attends their activities, and showers them with love and affection. Those things are great, but there is more to the grandparent role as found in Scripture.

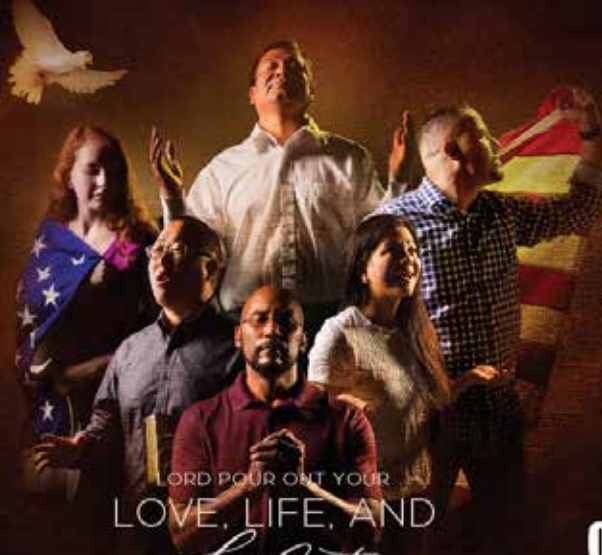
The most concise grandparenting verse in the Bible is Deuteronomy 4:9:

Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them fade from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them.

We have a clear mandate in this verse: a two generation responsibility to pass on faith. Our responsibilities don’t end with our children but extend to our grandchildren as well. If the command in this verse were carried out in a family—picture this—there would be six adults devoted to passing on faith to every child: mom, dad, grandma and grandpa on one side, and nana and papa on the other! Of course, many families have “missing pieces” to that picture: in some situations, there is only one grandparent devoted to passing on faith – the others either are not in the picture at all or don’t fulfill that responsibility.

Whether we are one of six or by ourselves in this spiritual impact role, the mandate is clear: passing on faith to our grandkids is our duty before God! He commands us to teach two generations, not just one.

Adapted from 7 Essentials for Grandparenting Your Grandkids by Larry Fowler - Focus on the Family



70
Years of Prayer
for America
1952-2021



LORD POUR OUT YOUR
LOVE, LIFE, AND
Liberty

2 CORINTHIANS 3:17



WWW.NATIONALDAYOFPRAYER.ORG

NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER

Thursday, May 6, 2021

- 9 am **Outdoor Morning Prayer Service** (*Patio*)
We will gather near the church patio for a 30-minute service of morning prayer. Individuals are invited to bring their own lawn chairs.
- Noon **Prayer Service for the Nation** (*Sanctuary; Live-Streamed and posted to YouTube*)
A service of prayer for our nation, joining with Christians across the USA who will be gathering to pray. We will be inviting first responders from our community to join us for this gathering, so that we might pray for them and thank them for their service to the community.
- 3 pm **Elders Pray for VPC Church Family** (*Sanctuary*)
Session elders pray for each church member, affiliate member, and staff member by name. All are invited to attend, and to pray silently as each name is lifted up in prayer.
- 5 pm **Evening Prayer Service with Communion** (*Sanctuary; Live-Streamed and posted to YouTube*)
Scripture, prayer, music, and the Lord's Supper
- 7 pm **City-Wide Prayer Gathering** (*Downtown Gazebo*)
Pastors and civic leaders from the community will offer prayers for the nation and community, accompanied with music from local Christian artists. Bring your lawn chair to join with other Christians from across the Venice community.

Between the Designated Prayer Events, the chapel will be open (7 am and 7 pm) for personal prayer and communion with God.